

## Safety Tips

- Wear proper clothing. Even in summer, carry a flashlight and light jacket in case you are caught out after nightfall. Wear good walking shoes or hiking boots.
- Carry plenty of water, up to a gallon (4 liters) per person per day when performing strenuous activity in hot weather. Also bring a high-energy snack.
- It is best to hike with at least one other person. If you go alone, always leave word as to where you are going, what time you are leaving and what time you expect to return.
- It is unlawful to disturb or annoy wildlife, especially bats, reptiles, birds of prey and other protected species and their nesting areas. There are rattlesnakes in this part of the country, but they won't bother you if you don't bother them.
- If you become lost, stay in one place. You will conserve your energy and make it easier for searchers to find you.
- In case of an accident or a lost person, notify the nearest New Mexico State Police office at 505/287-4141; they will then notify a search and rescue field coordinator.
- Know your limitations; don't attempt climbs or hikes that you don't have the ability, equipment, or time to accomplish. Do not climb on cliffs unless you are an experienced rock climber.

Contact us at:  
El Malpais National Conservation Area  
Bureau of Land Management  
P.O. Box 846  
Grants, New Mexico 87020  
505/280-2918  
[www.blm.gov/nm](http://www.blm.gov/nm)  
or  
Northwest New Mexico Visitor Center  
1900 East Santa Fe Avenue  
Grants, New Mexico 87020  
505/876-2783  
[www.nps.gov/elma](http://www.nps.gov/elma)



Leave No Trace: Plan ahead and prepare - Travel and camp on durable surfaces - Dispose of waste properly - Leave what you find - Minimize campfire impacts - Respect wildlife - Be considerate of other visitors.

# General Rules & Regulations



How strange that nature does not  
knock, and yet does not intrude!

*Emily Dickinson*



New Mexico • Rio Puerco Field Office

BLM

Welcome to El Malpais National Conservation Area (NCA). Listed below are rules and regulations to keep in mind. We hope you enjoy your time with us.

### **Camping**

El Malpais NCA has one designated campground located 2 miles south of the Ranger Station along Hwy 117. This campground has marked sites, picnic tables, fire grates and vault toilets. No water is available at the campground but can be found at the Ranger Station from 8:30–4:30 daily. Campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Campsite reservations are not allowed. There is a limit of 7 days campsite occupancy in any 28-consecutive-day period. After the 7th day, campers must move at least 25 miles from the previous location, and must not return there for at least 30 days. Quiet hours are between 10 pm and 6 am. Horses and other pack animals are not allowed in the campground.

### **Backcountry Camping**

Campers wishing to stay in primitive and wilderness locations are not charged a fee. Do not camp or build a fire in or on any historic or prehistoric structure or within 300 yards of any spring, manmade waterhole, well, or water tank used by wildlife or domestic stock. Backcountry camping has a limit of 14 days in a 28-day period. The 14-day limit can be reached by a number of separate visits or through 14 days of continuous occupation. After the 14th day, campers must move beyond a 25-mile radius from the previous location, and must not return to any location within this radius for at least 30 days. Vehicles may not be parked further than 100 feet from designated roads.

“Pack it in, Pack it out” – Please clean up your campsite before you leave and practice Leave no Trace. It is recommended but not mandatory that you stop by the Ranger Station located on Hwy 117 to let a ranger know where you will be camping and how long you intend to stay.

### **Climbing**

Technical rock climbing within the La Ventana Natural Arch area is prohibited. Climbing is allowed at other areas within the NCA, but bolting is prohibited within wilderness. Please keep in mind that sandstone is generally of

poor quality for rock climbing and that most cliff faces are located in designated wilderness.

### **Pets**

Pets are allowed in the NCA but must be kept under control at all times. They are not permitted on ranger guided programs. Follow all posted signs; there are areas where pets must be leashed or are not allowed at all. Animals that are trained to assist handicapped persons are the exception to these rules. Please keep plenty of water on hand for you and your pet as water sources are limited.

Please respect wildlife at all times.



### **Fires**

Fires are permitted in the NCA; however, the use of gas stoves is encouraged. Use established fire rings where provided. If you construct a new fire ring, dismantle it and scatter ashes before you leave. You can use downed wood, but it is illegal to cut dead snags, live trees or branches. It is also illegal to use chainsaws for any purpose in wilderness areas. It is prohibited to build a fire on or near any historic or prehistoric structure, ruin site or cave resource.

Please use caution, be aware of the current fire dangers and restrictions, and make sure your fire is completely extinguished before you leave.

The BLM Ranger Station on Hwy 117 has the latest fire restrictions and information.

### **Hunting, Firearms and Fireworks**

It is prohibited to use, display or carry weapons within developed campsites or picnic areas. Discharging firearms, hunting and trapping are illegal within developed recreation areas and within ½ mile of a developed recreation site, residence, campsite, or occupied area.

Hunting and trapping are permitted on NCA lands, including the wilderness areas. It is your responsibility to obtain the proper license or permit and to be aware of the rules and regulations set by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. It is illegal to discharge a firearm or any other implement capable of taking human life on, from, or across a developed road; within 40 feet of a road; within a fenced right-of-way; across a body of water; or in a reckless or careless manner.

**Driving off designated roads in order to retrieve game is prohibited, as is the possession or use of fireworks anywhere on public lands.**

### **Roads**

When driving on backcountry roads, it is recommended that you have a high-clearance vehicle. Travel with any motorized or mechanized equipment (including mountain or dirt bikes) is restricted to designated roads.

Designated wilderness areas are only accessible by stock-animal or foot traffic. All motorized and mechanized equipment is prohibited in designated wilderness areas. In accordance with the Wilderness Act, many former vehicle routes have been closed in wilderness.

### **Bicycles**

Mountain bikes are permitted on any of the designated roads. They are prohibited on trails and in wilderness areas.

### **Collecting**

The removal or collection of any historic or cultural artifact is prohibited anywhere within the NCA. Collecting renewable plant parts (flowers, berries, nuts, seeds, cones, and leaves) as well as individual rocks in reasonable amounts for personal use only, is permitted. A permit is needed for live plants or mineral resource collection or removal. Use of metal detectors is prohibited in the NCA.

